NUMB. CXXXII.

The GUARDIAN.

Quisque suos patimur manes.

Wednesday, August 12. 1713.

Mr. IRONSIDE,

THE following Letter was really written by a young Gentleman in a languishing Illness, which both himself, and those who attended him, thought it impossible for him to outlive. If you think such an Image of the State of a Man's Mind in that Circumstance be worth Publishing, it is at your Service, and take it as follows.

Dear Sir,

'YOU formerly observed to me, that nothing 'made a more ridiculous Figure in a Man's 'Life, than the Dignity we often find in him Sick 'and Well. Thus one of an unfortunate Constitution is perpetually exhibiting a miserable Example of the Weakness of his Mind, or of his Body, in their Turns. I have had frequent Opportunities of late to consider my self in these different Views, and hope I have received some Advantage by it. If what Mr. *Waller* says be true, that

The Soul's dark Cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new Light thro' Chinks that Time has made:

'Then surely Sickness, contributing no less than 'old Age to the shaking down this Scaffolding of 'the Body, may discover the inclosed Structure more plainly. Sickness is a sort of early old Age; 'it teaches us a Diffidence in our Earthly State, and 'inspires us with the Thoughts of a future, better 'than a thousand Volumes of Philosophers and Divines. It gives so warning a Concussion to those 'Props of our Vanity, our Strength and Youth, 'that we think of fortifying our selves within, when 'there is so little dependance on our Outworks. 'Youth, at the very best, is but a Betrayer of Human Life in a gentler and smoother manner than 'Age: Tis like a Stream that nourishes a Plant 'upon its Bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the Sight, but at the same time is undermining 'it at the Root in secret. My Youth has dealt more 'fairly and openly with me; it has afforded several 'Prospects of my Danger, and given me an Advantage not very common to young Men, that the 'Attractions of the World have not dazzled me 'very much; and I began where most People end, 'with a full Conviction of the Emptiness of all 'sorts of Ambition, and the unsatisfactory Nature 'of all human Pleasures.

'When a smart Fit of Sickness tells me this 'Scurvy Tenement of my Body will fall in a little 'time, I am e'en as unconcern'd as was that honest *Hibernian*, who (being in Bed in the great Storm 'some Years ago, and told the House would tumble over his Head) made Answer, *What care I for 'the House? I am only a Lodger.*

'I fancy 'tis the best time to die when one is in 'the best Humour, and so excessively weak as I 'now am, I may say with Conscience, that I'm 'not at all uneasie at the Thought that many Men, 'whom I never had any Esteem for, are likely to 'enjoy this World after me. When I reflect what 'an inconsiderable little Atome every single Man is, 'with respect to the whole Creation, methinks 'tis 'a Shame to be concerned at the Removal of such a 'trivial Animal as I am. The Morning after my *Exit*, the Sun will rise as bright as ever, the 'Flowers smell as sweet, the Plants spring as green, 'the World will proceed in its old Course, People 'will laugh as heartily, and Marry as fast, as they 'were used to do. *The Memory of Man* (as it is 'elegantly exprest in the Wisdom of *Solomon*) *passeth 'away as the remembrance of a Guest that tarrieth 'but one Day.* There are Reasons enough, in the 'fourth Chapter of the same Book, to make any 'young Man contented with the Prospect of Death. *'For honourable Age is not that which standeth in 'length of Time, or is measured by number of Years. 'But Wisdom is the gray Hair to Men, and an unspotted Life is old Age.* He was taken away speedily, lest that *Wickedness should alter his Understanding, or Deceit beguile his Soul.*

I am,

Yours.

To NESTOR IRONSIDE, *Esq*; *Greeting.*

Old Dadd,

'I Am so happy as to be the Husband of a Wo'man that never is in the Wrong, and yet is 'at continual War with every body, especially with 'all her Servants, and my self. As to her Maids, 'she never fails of having at least a dozen or four'teen in each Year, yet never has above one at a 'time, and the last that comes is always the worst 'that ever she had in her Life; although they have 'given very good Content in better Families than 'mine for several Years together: Not that she has 'the Pleasure of turning them away, but she does 'so Ferrit them about, *Forsooth* and *Mistress* them 'up, and so find fault with every thing they do, and 'talks to them so *loud* and so *long*, that they either 'give her immediate Warning, or march off with'out any Wages at all: So that thro' her great Zeal 'and Care to make them better Servants than any 'in the World, and their Obstinacy in being no 'better than they can, our House is a sort of *Bed'lam*, and nothing in Order; for by that time a

'Maid

(Price Two Pence.)